



LIBRARY
RE
OCT
PERIODICAL

"TRUTH BEARS THE TORCH IN THE SEARCH FOR TRUTH."—*Lucretius.*

VOL. 3.

SILVERTON, OREGON, THURSDAY, DECEMBER 14, E. M. 299 (A. D. 1899.)

NO. 49.

Let Us Alone.

BY CHARLES MACKAY.

MANY—and yet our fate is one,
And little, after all, we crave—
Enjoyment of the common sun,
Fair passage to the common grave;
Our bread and fire, our plain attire,
The free possession of our own.
Rulers, be wise! and kings and czars,
Let us alone—let us alone.

The world is the abode of men,
And not of demons stark and blind;
And Eden's self might bloom again
If men did justice to mankind.
We want no more of Nature's store
Than Nature meant to be our own;
Masters, and regents of the earth,
Let us alone—let us alone.

Your meddling brought us grief and care
And added misery day by day;
We're not so foolish as we were,
Nor fashioned of such ductile clay;
Your petty jars, your wicked wars,
Have lost their charm, the gilding's
gone;
Victorious marshals, vaulting kings,
Let us alone—let us alone.

Tho' dwelling in a little isle,
We bear no hate to other lands,
And think that Peace on earth might
smile
If we and others joined our hands;
In Reason's spite why should we fight?
We'll war no more, we're wiser grown.
Quibblers and stirrers up of hate,
Let us alone—let us alone.

White man or black, to us alike;
Foemen of no men will we live;
We will not lift our hand to strike,
Nor evil for advantage give;
Our hands are free to earn their fee,
Our tongues to let the truth be known.
So, despots, knaves, and foes of right,
Let us alone—let us alone.

Great are our destinies; our task,
Long since begun, shall never end
While suffering has a boon to ask,
Or Truth needs spokesmen to defend;
While vice or crime pollute the time,
While nations bleed, or patriots groan,
Rulers, be wise! and meddling fools,
Let us alone—let us alone.

The Origin of the Ego.

BY DR. PAUL TOPINARD.

A DELICATE question arises.
Where, when, and by what
mechanism is the sense of
personality formed which inheres
in the merids, zooids and demes—
that is to say, the Ego? . . .

In the generalized ganglionic period, at which we now are, acts are always deducible to an excitation followed by a reaction, but with the three following complications: (1) The conversion of the excitation into movement is no longer effected at the spot, but in the nearest ganglion; (2) the ganglion discriminates between the different kinds of excitation and responds by simple or co-ordinated movements varying with the excitation; (3) the excitations occasionally pass beyond the ganglion and spread in greater or less degree to others. Suppose an impression is produced on the antenna of an insect. If it is slight, it will act lo-

cally on the cells or tissues, and the extremity of the antenna will wrinkle. If it be increased, it will be reflected to the nearest ganglion, and the antenna and jaws will be set in motion. If it is strong, the entire animal will respond to the reaction. Does an ego intervene in this last case? If the co-ordinated movements have already been produced and repeated under the same conditions and a habit has resulted, then this assumption is useless. But if the impression is novel, if there is occasion for the modification of the act—in a word, if initiative is needed—then necessarily an ego must intervene. But where, on this hypothesis, is its seat? In one or in several ganglia together? I conclude, in several. Morphological unity does not exist as yet in the ganglion of the insect. The insect has its sense of individuality, it discriminates what is parcel of itself from what is extraneous to it. It has its subjectivity, but this subjectivity, its ego, is diffuse. All the facts set forth by Sir John Lubbock in his work on bees and ants, and by other authors who have written on this subject, confirm this conclusion.

At some unknown period in evolution a grand advance is made in the nervous system. A series of ganglia arising from the zoonites of a linear colony are fused into a long cord, the spinal cord of vertebrates. We know of no living animal limited exclusively to this organ, excepting the larva of the ascidian and amphioxus. But physiological experiments on ordinary vertebrates have indicated what would be its functions. In this hypothetical organism certain impressions will be converted into movements by scattered ganglia in the viscera and along the paths of the nerves; others more intimately connected with exterior acts, would have their centers of reflex action and of co-ordination in particular zones of the cord; those which play a controlling part and induce modifications of the preceding movements would end in the sensorial ganglionic net of the cephalic extremity of the cord. We say in the net, because everything leads us to believe that the ego is as yet diffused.

The last and greatest progress is accomplished when around the sensory ganglia of the extremity of the cord a proliferation is produced of the cells and nervous fibers, which gives rise to the cerebral hemispheres. Henceforward there is no

more doubt, the centralization of the age is effected, it has found its true expression; seemingly the ego has been transported from the cord to these new organs, but it is so only in appearance. It is a new ego, 'sui generis' and intelligent, that has been formed. The ganglia of the body continue their organic roles and maintain their petty individualities. The cord fulfills the same functions and also preserves its powerful individuality. The hemispheres are simply a superadded organ—the organ of thought.

Ganglionic animals (insects, etc.) do not think; they reflect impressions, by associating or not associating under given conditions the action of several ganglia. Animals having hemispheres—that is to say vertebrates—alone think. Rudimentary thought, at its beginning in the lizards of M. Delbœuf, in the crocodiles of the Nile, and in fishes generally; having less value perhaps at this period than apparently it has in certain ganglionic animals; but already reaching considerable heights in the birds and mammals, attaining its highest in man, and always proportional to the diverse morphological factors of which it is the result! Through it the ego of the hemispheres intervenes, and at its leisure, more or less conscious of its motives of action, suspending, accelerating or modifying the co-ordinated acts relating to its exterior life, of which the cord still remains the center of production. The scattered ganglia have their habits, the results of the repetition of the same acts confirmed by time; the cord has its habits; the hemispheres have also their habits, but of a different kind. The hemispheres alone, when their attention is sufficiently solicited, when the interest, pleasure or caprice of the individual is at stake, and when they will it, are able to alter their habits and those of the cord. They alone represent the reasoning ego.

It follows from this examination that the ego, such as we have experience of it in ourselves, is the final product of a long evolution which can be reduced to four stages. In the first, or in the solitary cells of the protist kingdom, it existed merely in a potential state. In the second, or in the non-solidarized colonies, it was presented in the form of partial and scattered egos whose sphere was restricted to the special functions with which the group that each represented was clothed. In the third, or in the sol-

Continued on 6th page.

The Thanksgiving Home Festival of Joy.

A Lay Sermon at the Thanksgiving Celebration at Liberal Hall, Silverton, Oregon, Era of Man, 299.

BY T. B. WAKEMAN.

President Hosmer, of the Liberal University, was introduced by Louis Rauch, the president of the meeting, and read the Thanksgiving Proclamations of William McKinley, President of the United States, and of Hon. Theodore T. Geer, Governor of the State of Oregon (the latter Proclamation having been sent by the Secretary of State, with the seal of the State attached.) The chairman then introduced Mr. Wakeman, who made the following address, which was well received by a large and appreciative audience.

MR. CHAIRMAN AND GOOD PEOPLE OF SILVERTON:

If we are proud of anything it is that we are not only law-abiding but law-honoring citizens, and when both the President of the United States, and the Governor of our State under its great seal, sends us a "recommendation" to put up "fervent prayers and thanksgiving" it certainly becomes us to comply, so far as to meet and consider how Liberal, that is emancipated, people may make this recommendation now reasonably useful. Now reasonably, we say, for we can never forget that we now live in a new heaven and earth, which science has made an absolute fact to us since the first Thanksgiving was observed by the Pilgrims around Plymouth Rock.

Let us then inquire how this custom came about, and what may be its validity, propriety and practical uses now. In its American form we certainly have it from the Pilgrims who landed at Plymouth, December 22, A. D. 1620, E. M. 20. It originated with them because they were "SEPARATISTS," that is, of those who had separated from the State religion and all control of religion by the State, and wished to make that fact apparent by having days and festivals other than the established State church. So they fixed upon the month before Christmas as their Pilgrim Christmas, to be for them a day of thankful prayer and thanksgiving, not for the birth of Christ, which they knew could not have been on that day, but for the close of the harvest and the ingathering of "the kindly fruits of the earth," which was one result of the year's toil. To begin with then, Liberals may note two things about this origin of our Thanksgiving. First, it was the beginning of the break up of the Christ myth; and second, a step towards the separa-